AN ADDRESS

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF CAMBRIDGE

AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD,

EXHORTING THEM TO TURN FROM THE FALSE WORSHIP OF

THREE PERSONS,

TO THE WORSHIP OF

THE ONE TRUE GOD.

"Ye worship ye know not what." JOHN iv. 22.

ST. IVES.

PRINTED BY T. BLOOM.

And Sold by all the Bookfellers in Cambridge; W. DAVIS, Ely, and the Printer. 1788.

[PRICE TWO-PENCE.]

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF CAMBRIDGE, &c.

BRETHREN,

PERMIT me to addreſs you on a ſubject of the greateſt importance to a ſincere believer in Chriſt. I obſerve that many of you every ſeventh day, frequent ſome place ſet apart for religious worſhip. You there profeſs to offer up prayers to the Being who created the world. Whatever may be the laws or cuſtoms of your different places of worſhip, you preſume that they are founded on the holy ſcriptures. Any thing contrary to thoſe ſcriptures, ought not, you think, to be admitted into your worſhip. Surely then it behoves you at all times to examine your opinions, to ſee whether you are really and truly worſhipping the true God, the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or a Phantom of your own imaginations.

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ARE you then worſhippers of God, or not? It is a ſerious queſtion. Let me perſuade you to give it a moment's conſideration. The words which Chriſt uſed, in anſwer to a Jewiſh enquirer after the firſt commandment of the law, may aſſiſt you in your thoughts. "Hear, O Iſrael; the "Lord our God is one Lord; and thou ſhalt love "the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with "all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind, and with all "thy ſtrength: this is the firſt commandment." * I bring you to this teſt; do you really worſhip God of whom Chriſt ſpeaks, or do you not? If you do not, Chriſt himſelf bears witneſs againſt you, that you are not his diſciples. To know, whether you do, or do not, deſpiſe your Saviour, you muſt conſider who God is, of whom Chriſt ſpeaks.

BEFORE I examine this point, let me obſerve to you what I have ſeen or heard in your places of worſhip. In the eſtabliſhed Churches, a form of prayer is uſed, in which are the following words —O God the Son redeemer of the world — O God the holy Ghoſt — O holy bleſſed and glorious Trinity, three perſons and one God, have mercy upon us miſerable ſinners — O Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

* Mark xii. 29.

Chriſt, have mercy upon us — and in many ſimilar paſſages prayers are addreſſed to Jeſus Chriſt, to the Holy Ghoſt, and to the Trinity. In moſt alſo of the places of worſhip belonging to the Diſſenters, prayers are offered up to Jeſus Chriſt, to the Holy Ghoſt, and to the Trinity,

Now, Brethren, if Jeſus Chriſt be not God, if the Holy Ghoſt be not God, if the Trinity be not God, you are guilty of a breach of Chriſt's commandments in praying to them; and if you pray to all theſe, you err grievouſly, for Jeſus Chriſt tells us, that the Lord our God is one Lord; to which great truth Moſes, the Prophets, and the Apoſtles, bear witneſs. You worſhip, alas! other gods than the true God, forgetting what is ſaid in the Scriptures, "Thou ſhalt not bow down to them, nor worſhip them."

Of whom then did Chriſt ſpeak: the words are taken from Deut. 6th chap. 4th ver. and literally tranſlated are, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. Jehovah is the name, by which God made himſelf known to Moſes, — Jehovah created the heavens and the earth — Jehovah called Abraham — ſpake to Moſes — revealed himſelf to the Prophets — was worſhipped by the Jewiſh nation.

Throughout the whole of the old Teſtament, Jehovah declares himſelf to be one, and that there is no other God beſide him — the Children of Iſrael, while they obeyed him, worſhipped him as the one and only true God; and when they mixed with the worſhip of Jehovah that of Idols, they were brought to their ſenſes by ſevere puniſhments. When Chriſt preached to the Jews, Jehovah was the object of their worſhip; of him alſo Chriſt bears witneſs, namely, that Jehovah is the only true God, that * there is no one good but him, that he is his God † and Father, that Jehovah ‡ his Father is greater than he.

These few paſſages of Scripture are, I ſhould think, ſufficient to convince an unprejudiced mind, that they, who offer up prayers to Jeſus Chriſt, to the Holy Ghoſt, or to the Trinity, are highly criminal: but ſince you have formed for yourſelves, without any grounds from Scripture, ſuch fanciful gods, let us conſider each of them ſeparately.

1ſt. Of *Jeſus Chriſt.* Jeſus Chriſt, ſays an Apoſtle to the Jews, ‖ "was a man approved of "God

* Matt. xix. 17. † Matt. xi. 25. John xx. 17.
‡ John xiv. 28. ‖ Acts ii. 22.

"God among you by miracles, and wonders, and "signs, which God did by him, in the midſt of "you, as ye yourſelves alſo know: him, being "delivered by the determinate counſel and fore-"knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked "hands have crucified and ſlain: whom God hath "raiſed up, having looſed the pains of death." — * Again, "this Jeſus hath God raiſed up, whereof "we all are witneſſes: — and therefore, † let "all the houſe of Iſrael know aſſuredly, that God "hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have cru-"cified, both Lord and Chriſt." I have ſelected theſe paſſages out of many others, becauſe they give a plain account of our Saviour. There is a clear diſtinction between God and Chriſt. Chriſt performed wonders, but it was by the power of God — by God's permiſſion he was delivered into the hands of the Jews and ſlain — it was God that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead — it was God that made him Lord and Chriſt.

How then ſay ye, in expreſs contradiction to Scripture, and to common ſenſe, that Jeſus Chriſt is God; making no difference between the great Being, who ſent, and the man who was ſent — between him, who knoweth all things, and the man,

* Acts ii. 32. † Acts ii. 36.

man, † who declared, that he did not know all things — between him, who is the God and Father of Jeſus Chriſt, and that ſame Jeſus, who declared ‡ that his Father was greater than he.

Consult common ſenſe. Could God lie in the womb of a woman? could God expire on the croſs? could God be buried in the grave? Shocking ſuppoſitions! Brethren, examine for yourſelves. Let no man deceive you, by a ſpecious humility, to give worſhip to any, but the one true God, for * "thou ſhalt worſhip him alone."

2d. Or *the Holy Ghoſt*. Our forefathers ſuppoſed, and at the preſent day ignorant people in many countries ſuppoſe, that a man conſiſts of two different ſubſtances, one, which we can ſee and feel; the other, a ſubſtance not to be felt — When a man died, they ſuppoſed, that theſe two ſubſtances were ſeparated one from the other. The body was conveyed to the ground, and the Ghoſt, for ſo they called the other ſubſtance, hovered about the place. Hence a number of idle tales are told about Ghoſts in Church yards, and it was ſaid of a man dying, that he gave up the Ghoſt. The Papiſts have not failed to make uſe

† Matt. xxiv. 36. ‡ John xiv. 28. * Matt. iv. 10.

uſe of this fooliſh tale to very bad purpoſes, for they ſay, that the Ghoſt is tormented for many years, in a place called by them Purgatory. The Greek word in the Scriptures, which means ſpirit or wind or breath, is frequently tranſlated by this word Ghoſt. But wherever it is ſo tranſlated, it is applied to God, in the ſame manner, as the ſpirit of a man is to a man. When you ſay, ſuch a man's ſpirit is gentle or untameable, you do not mean, that the man and his ſpirit are different perſons. Neither ought you, when ſpeaking of God, to ſay that God and his Spirit are different perſons. Your addreſſes to the Holy Ghoſt have no foundation in Scripture, and they are ſtrictly prohibited by the firſt commandment, "thou ſhalt "have none other gods but me."

3d. Of *the Trinity.* Trinity is a Latin word, not to be found in the Scriptures. The notion, annexed to it in your Creed, of three perſons, each of whom is God, making but one God, is rank nonſenſe. And will you, my Brethren, enter into the preſence of God, pretend to worſhip him, and yet give him a name, the invention of idle and wicked diſputers. Reflect — There is but one God, and his name is one, and his Glory will he not give to another.

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PERHAPS you will reply to me, that I have ſelected thoſe paſſages only, which favour my opinion, and have neglected others, which prove Jeſus Chriſt to be God. It is ſufficient for me to obſerve, that the Scripture cannot contradict itſelf. The paſſages by which you have been deluded, (and I alſo once was deceived through the prejudices of birth, of education and of habit) to believe Chriſt to be God, will be found, on examination, to convey no ſuch meaning. Search the Scriptures. Point out one ſingle paſſage, in which Jeſus Chriſt declared himſelf to be God. Point out one, in which the Apoſtles declared him to be God. In a matter of ſuch importance, it is not proper for you, to infer from this or that paſſage, ill explained, that he is God: but as he expreſsly declares himſelf to be inferior to God, believe his words; and as he commands, worſhip the Father in ſpirit and in truth.

PERHAPS you will ſay, that many pious and learned men have died in your faith. Such men are alſo to be found, among Catholics, among Heathens. Yet you will not ſay, that the Romiſh religion is true, or that Idols are to be worſhipped.

PERHAPS you think it ſufficient to follow, without enquiry, the religion of your Fathers. Had your Fathers in ſucceſſion done the ſame, what would now be the religion of this country? Three Centuries ago, they were immerſed in ignorance and Popery; ſome Centuries farther back, they were groſs idolaters. On this principle, Jeſus Chriſt and his Apoſtles would have had no hearers. Be not deceived, Brethren, religion is a perſonal concern — the Bible is open before you — from thence you are to form your opinions, not from the notions of your Fathers, or the cuſtom of the times.

PERHAPS you will ſay, you are ignorant, and theſe things are Myſteries. Brethren, to whom did Chriſt preach? was it not to the poor? was it not to the unlearned? were not his diſciples from the loweſt of the people? did the great men, did any of the rulers or the Phariſees believe on him? ‡ The preſent times are like thoſe in which Chriſt preached. The rich and learned, are not more likely, to become his diſciples now, than formerly. As to the Myſteries you talk of, remember that Myſtery means ſomething hid; * revelation means the diſcovery of that, which was hid and unknown. There are no myſteries in the religion of Jeſus Chriſt: his goſpel is plain, ſimple, and clear. Even the "myſtery

‡ John vii. 48. * Mark iv. 22. Col. i. 26.

"myſtery of iniquity," which began to work in the Apoſtles' time, and now works, and keeps in bondage the nations of Europe, is ſufficiently known, to every enquiring mind.

You will ſay, perhaps, that by adopting my notions of the true God, you will loſe the benefit of ſocial worſhip — The ſeven thouſand men, who refuſed to bend their knees to Baal, did not, you may be ſure, worſhip in the temples of Baal. Social worſhip is a very deſirable thing; but for the ſake of ſocial prayer, I cannot worſhip an idol. Brethren, I call you from falſe objects of worſhip, to the worſhip of the living God. If any one, who reads this addreſs, believes with me, that there is one God only, the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, I call on him, to forſake the temples, where they have ſet up other objects of worſhip. To the reſt, I ſay with the Apoſtle, examine yourſelves, prove your own ſelves, whether you be in the faith; and if your enquiry leads you to this great truth, that the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the only true God, I ſay to you, with the Scriptures,

WORSHIP HIM ALONE.

Jeſus College,
Sept. 10. 1 AP 66

W. FRIEND.